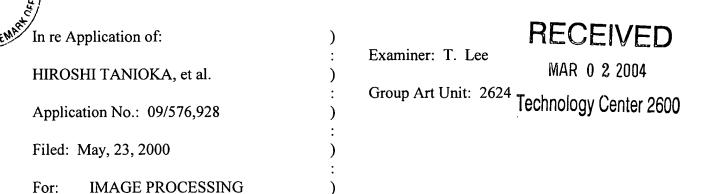
00862.021913.





February 24, 2004

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

APPARATUS AND METHOD

## INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Sir:

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.56, Applicants respectfully direct the Examiner's attention to the documents listed below and on the enclosed Form PTO-1449. A copy of each of the documents so listed is enclosed.

U.S. Patent No. 5,760,918 U.S. Patent No. 5,825,940 U.S. Patent No. 6,118,547 U.S. Patent No. 6,134,355

03/01/2004 WASFAW1 00000032 09576928

02 FC:1806

180.00 DP

The subject application has received an Office Action on the merits but has not yet received any of a final action, a Notice Of Allowance, or an action that otherwise closes prosecution on the merits. Accordingly, this Information Disclosure Statement is

filed under 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(c) and is accompanied by the \$180.00 fee specified at 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(p).

The Examiner is urged to study this information in its entirety and to form an independent determination of the materiality of the information to the claimed invention. Additionally, the Examiner is requested to indicate that this information has been considered by initialing the appropriate portion of Form PTO-1449 and returning the initialed form to Applicants with the next communication.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

Attorney for Applicants

Registration No. 42,746

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO 30 Rockefeller Plaza New York, New York 10112-2200 Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

CA\_MAIN 76023 v1